

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJ: PHILIPPINES DAILY EXPRESS EDITORIAL ON BASES ISSUE

PHILIPPINES DAILY EXPRESS EDITORIAL MONDAY DEC. 6 TITLED "U.S.
DISTORTING RP POSITION ON BASES ISSUE" FOLLOWS:

"ONCE AGAIN THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN PICTURED UNFAVORABLY IN A
CANARD PEDDLED BY THE AMERICAN PRESS, AND THIS TIME IT IS MADE TO
APPEAR THAT THE PHILIPPINES HAS AGREED TO ALLOW THE UNITED STATES
CONTINUED USE AND OPERATION OF PHILIPPINE MILITARY BASES IN EXCHANGE
FOR \$1 BILLION IN MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID FROM UNCLE SAM. NO ONE,
FILIPINO OR AMERICAN, WHO IS FULLY AWARE OF AND UNDERSTANDS THE
PHILIPPINE POSITION ON THE MILITARY BASES ISSUE, COULD POSSIBLY HAVE
SWALLOWED THAT REPORT WITHOUT A GRAIN OF SALOT. AT FACE VALUE, THE
REPORT WAS IMMEDIATELY SUSPECT, AND THE DENIAL OF FOREIGN SECRETARY
CARLOS P. ROMULO MERELY CONFIRMED THE SUSPICIONS.

"THE STORY IS NOT TRUE. WE HAVE NOT COME TO ANY AGREEMENT.
THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL CONTINUE, "ROMULO SAID, REFERING TO THE US
PRESS REPORT. HE MADE THE DENIAL TO A VISTING FILIPINO NEWSMAN IN
NEW YORK. NOW INsofar AS THE RP-US MILITARY BASES NEGOTIATIONS ARE
CONCERNED, A BETTER INFORMED MAN THAN GENERAL ROMULO, THERE IS NONE.
AS THE CHIEF PHILIPPINE NEGOTIATOR, ROMULO HAS BEEN HOLDING TALKS
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WITH HIS US COUNTERPART, SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER, THE

LATEST OF WHICH TOOK PLACE RECENTLY IN MEXICO CITY.

" THE PRESS REPORT IN QUESTION, DISSEMINATED WORLDWIDE BY AMERICAN WIRE SERVICES, HAD QUOTED US GOVERNMENT SOURCES AS SAYING THAT "THE \$1 BILLION PRICE TAG IS NEARLY DOUBLE WHAT THE FORD ADMINISTRATION HAD OFFERED BEFORE THE BASES TALKS HALTED LAST SEPTEMBER." WHETHER THE SOURCES WERE QUOTED ACCURATELY, WE DO NOT KNOW AT THE MOMENT. WHAT SEEMS NOTEWORTHY IS THE FACT THAT THE QUOTATION ECHOES A PREVIOUS STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR WILLIAM H. SULLIVAN, THE SPOESMAN IN THE PHILIPPINES OF THE OUTGOING FORD ADMINISTRATION, WHEN THE SECOND ROUND OF THE BASES TALKS OPENED IN BAGUIO CITY LAST JUNE. IN THAT OPENING SESSION, SULLIVAN MADE A CONTROVERSIAL STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS PREPARED 'TO PAY THE PRICE' FOR PROVIDING PROTECTION TO THE SO-CALLED 'FREE-WORLD' COUNTRIES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, INCLUDING THE PHILIPPINES.

"WHATEVER MOTIVES THE FORD ADMINISTRATION AND THE US PRESS MAY HAVE IN TRYING TO PICTURE US AS A BUNCH OF 'MATERIALISTIC INGRATES,' WE REALLY CANNOT SAY FOR CERTAIN. TO BE SURE, IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT THEY ARE IGNORANT OF OR HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD THE PHILIPPINE POSITION ON THE BASES ISSUE, FOR TIME AND AGAIN THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES HAVE TAKEN PAINS TO EXPLAIN IT TO THEM.

" WE DO NOT BUY THE US LINE THAT ITS MAINTENANCE OF MILITARY BASES HERE IS FOR OUR PROTECTION. FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, THE AMERICANS, FOR STRATEGIC DEFENSE REASONS, NEED THESE BASES MORE THAN WE DO. THAT IS WHY WE SAY THAT IF THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE ON PHILIPPINE SOIL WILL CONTINUE TO MEAN A DEROGATION FROM PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY, THEN WE CAN DO WITHOUT THESE BASES, AND THE AMERICANS CAN PACK UP AND LEAVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE AMERICANS TRULY RECOGNIZE OUR SOVEREIGNTY, AS THEY CLAIM THEY DO, THEN THEY MUST AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING: (1) RENUNCIATION OF EXTRA-TERRITORIAL RIGHTS ON THE BASES; (2) ACCEPTANCE OF PHILIPPINE CONTROL (NOT TOKEN BUT SUBSTANTIAL) OVER BASES OPERATIONS WITHOUT NECESSARILY HAMSTRINGING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS; (3) RECOGNITION OF PHILIPPINE JURISDICTION OVER A WIDE RANGE OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES BY AMERICAN SERVICEMEN ON OR OFF BASE; (4) RETURN OF PORTIONS OF THE BASE AREAS THAT ARE NO LONGER IN ACTIVE USE; AND (5) PAYMENT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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SUBSTANTIAL COMPENSATION FOR THE USE OF THESE BASE LANDS. IF THE US GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO PAY SUBSTANTIAL SUMS FOR THE USE OF SPANISH, TURKISH AND GREEK MILITARY BASES, IT SHOULD BE PREPARED TO DO NO LESS WITH RESPECT TO THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY BASES.

"WHILE THE PHILIPPINE STAND DOES NOT MAKE FOR EASY COMPREHENSION, LET ALONE SIMPLE NEGOTIATIONS, THE POSSIBILITY OF MISUNDERSTANDING IT, IS QUITE REMOTE. HOWEVER, DISTORTING IT IS

ANOTHER MATTER, AND TO OUR MIND, THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WASHINGTON
AND CERTAIN SECTORS OF THE AMERICAN PRESS DID, WHEN THEY MADE IT
APPEAR THAT A NEW RP-US MILITARY BASES AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED
PRIMARILY, IF NOT SOLELY, ON THE BASIS OF PECUNIARY CONSIDERATIONS.

SULLIVAN

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